

Message Text

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PAGE 01 SANTIA 01867 272300Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SANTIAGO 1867

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: CI, PINT, PFOR

SUBJECT: GENERAL LEIGH ON DETENTE AND ECONOMIC PROFITEERS

1. SUMMARY: IN SPEECH TO SANTIAGO ROTARY CLUB MARCH 26, AIR FORCE COMMANDER AND JUNTA MEMBER GENERAL GUSTAVO LEIGH EXPLICITLY STATED GOC'S HERETOFORE PRIVATELY HELD VIEWS ON FOLLIES OF DETENTE. ON DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, LEIGH WARNED BUSINESSMEN THAT THEIR SELFISHNESS AND LACK OF SOCIAL CONCERN COULD TRIGGER EVEN STRONGER GOVERNMENT MEASURES AGAINST THEM THAN THOSE ALREADY TAKEN. WE NOTE SHARP DISTINCTION GOC APPEARS TO BE MAKING BETWEEN THE POLITICAL RIGHT, WHICH CONTINUES AS GOVERNMENT'S BASE OF SUPPORT, AND BIG BUSINESS WHICH IS COMING MORE AND MORE UNDER RHETORICAL ATTACK BY GOC LEADERS. END SUMMARY.

2. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS: LEIGH TRACED EVOLUTION OF WORLD RELATIONS FROM COLD WAR TO DETENTE, THEN STATED: "THE GUIDING POWER OF THE WESTERN WORLD (I.E., THE UNITED STATES) CHANGES ITS STRATEGY AND SOUGHT APPEASEMENT, SOUGHT A POLICY OF DETENTE. AND WHAT RESULTS HAVE BEEN OBTAINED BY THIS POLICY IN TODAY'S WORLD? ONLY THAT THE WINNER HAS BEEN THE SOVIET UNION, WHICH HAS CONTINUED INFILTRATING, ADVANCING, CORRUPTING, UNDERMINING, AT THE EXPENSE OF THE DETENTE PROPOSED BY THE GUIDING POWER OF THE WESTERN WORLD. AND EVEN MORE, IT HAS INFILTRATED AND UNDERMINED AND GAINED GROUND IN THAT

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 SANTIA 01867 272300Z

SAME WESTERN POWER WHICH BELIEVED INNOCANTLY AND INGENUOUSLY

IN A BETTER WORLD.

3. "TODAY THE WORLD IS BECOMING UNSTABLE. WE ARE SEEING HOW WORLD COMMUNCPA ADVANCES, HOW IT IS INSTALLED IN THE CARIBBEAN, HOW IT HAS A FOOHOLD IN SOUTH AMERICA, HOW IT HAS SHAKEN ITALY, HOW PORTUGAL HAS FALLEN, HOW ALL OF INDOCHINA IS FALLING. AND HOW NUMEROUS COUNTRIES OF EUROPE ARE DEEPLY UNDERMINED. THIS IS WORTH THINKING ABOUT; ALTHOUGH I AM NOT THE ONE INDICATED TO EVALUATE THESE EVENTS, I BELIEVE WE ARE LIVING IN A KEY HISTORIC PERIOD.

4. "WAR IS NOW BEING TALKED ABOUT; AGAIN THERE IS A POSSIBILITY OF A CHILL, AND THIS GENERAL SITUATION DEEPLY AFFECTS CHILE, A COUNTRY FAR FROM THE WORLD POWER CENTERS. AND I HONESTLY AND SINCERELY BELIEVE THAT THE ACTION OF THE ARMED FORCES AND CARABINEROS ON SEPTEMBER 11 WAS PROVIDENTIAL AND EXTREMELY OPPORTUNE, SINCE OTHERWISE WE WOULD HAVE IRRETRIEVABLY FALLEN INTO THE MOSCOW CAMP AND WE WOULD HAVE BEEN CONVERTED INTO SLAVES AND SERVANTS OF A STATE WHICH ITSELF WAS THE SERVANT OF THE MOTHER STATE."

5. DOMESTIC AFFAIRS: GIVEN WORLD SITUATION, LEIGH CONTINUED, NATIONAL UNITY ENCOMPASSING ARMED FORCES, PRODUCTIVE SECTORS OF SOCIETY, AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS IS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. THIS IS GOC PLAN. "WE STARTED WELL AFTER SEPTEMBER 11 WITH AN EMOTIONAL REACTION, BUT 18 MONTHS LATER THE REACTION IS NOT THE SAME. THIS REACTION IS COOLING. BUSINESSMEN ARE THINKING ONLY OF THEMSELVES -- THE CHILEAN IS ALWAYS THINKING THAT WHEN THE EARTHQUAKE COMES HE WON'T BE HIT IN THE HEAD -- HIS NEIGHBOR MAYBE, BUT THAT'S HIS PROBLEM; AND WHEN IT RAINS HE WON'T GET WET, JUST THE OTHERS; AND WHEN THE MORE MONEY I MAKE, THE MORE I KEEP, AND LET THE WORLD COLLAPSE. LET THE OTHER GUY COOPERATE. THAT IS WHAT I SEE IN DIFFERENT PRIVATE SECTORS. I SEE IT IN THE CONFEDERATION OF PRODUCTION AND TRADE, IN SOFOFA (MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION), AND IN OTHER ORGANIZATIONS OF BUSINESSMEN."

6. "I BELIEVE THAT AFTER 18 MONTHS THE GOVERNMENT HAS ENDED ITS PREACHING AND ITS PROSELITIZING. WE ARE GOING TO HAVE NO OTHER COURSE OF ACTION LEFT BUT TO PUT TOGETHER A BODY

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 SANTIA 01867 272300Z

OF LEGISLATION WHICH WILL USE THE FULL FORCE OF THE LAW TO ENGENDER THE OBLIGATORY UNITY OF ALL THE DEMOCRATIC SECTORS OF CHILE. WE CANNOT AGAIN RUN THE RISK OF FALLING INTO THE HANDS OF THOSE OMNIPOTENT DICTATORSHIPS WHICH WE ALL FEAR."

7. BOTH THE HEADS OF PRODUCTION AND TRADE CONFEDERATION AND SOFOFA, MANUEL VALDES AND RAUL SAHLI, IMMEDIATELY COMMENTED TO SANTIAGO PRESS THAT BOTH ORGANIZATIONS ARE

DEVOTING MAJOR EFFORTS TO SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT BUT HAVE BEEN HAMSTRUNG BY GOVERNMENT DELAYS AND INDECISION. BOTH PLEDGED TO VISIT GENERAL LEIGH TO EXPLORE HIS CRITICISMS IN GREATER DEPTH.

8. COMMENT: GOC SENIOR LEADERS ORDINARILY CONFINE THEIR PUBLIC REMARKS ON FOREIGN POLICY TO PLATITUDES ABOUT FRIENDSHIP WITH NEIGHBORS AND WARNINGS OF INTERNATIONAL MARXIST CONSPIRACY AGAINST CHILE. LEIGH'S SKEPTICAL DESCRIPTION OF RESULTS OF DETENTE GOES CONSIDERABLY FURTHER. IT FITS PERFECTLY THE VIEW OF SENIOR GOC LEADERS AS EXPRESSED TO U.S. OFFICIALS PRIVATELY, AS WELL AS EDITORIAL LINE OF SUCH NEWSPAPERS AS "EL MERCURIO." WE DO NOT RECALL, HOWEVER, SUCH AN EXPLICIT PUBLIC STATEMENT FROM A TOP GOC OFFICIAL, AND THEREFORE HAVE QUOTED FROM IT EXTENSIVELY.

9. ON DOMESTIC AFFAIRS, HIS REMARKS AT FIRST GLANCE HAVE RING OF A FRUSTRATED MAN WHO SEES THINGS NOT GOING AS GOC WISHES AND LASHES OUT AT OBSTRUCTIONIST, SELFISH ATTITUDES OF ECONOMIC ELITE. YET CASE CAN BE MADE THAT HIS STATEMENTS ARE PART OF WELL THOUGHT OUT GOC CAMPAIGN. LEIGH HAS BEEN IN FOREFRONT OF JAWBONING EFFORTS OF GOC IN RECENT MONTHS DESIGNED TO CONVINCE BIG BUSINESSMEN AND OTHER PRIVILEGED SECTORS THAT WINDFALL PROFITS, FINANCIAL SPECULATION, AND SOCIAL UNCONCERN WILL NOT BE TOLERATED BY GOVERNMENT. RECENTLY GOC MOVED FORCEFULLY AGAINST SOME TAX EVADERS, PROFITEERS, AND TRAFFICKERS IN BLACK MARKET DOLLARS.

10. GOC SEEMS TO MAKE A SHARP DISTINCTION BETWEEN BIG BUSINESS AND POLITICAL RIGHT. WHILE GOC IS POLITICALLY CONSERVATIVE AND HAS ATTRACTED TO ITS RANKS CIVILIANS OF SIMILAR PERSUASION, IT HAS CONSISTENTLY EXPRESSED ITS CONCERN FOR THE LOT OF ECONOMICALLY AND SOCIALLY LESS FORTUNATE.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 SANTIA 01867 272300Z

IT HAS NEVER MADE COMMON CAUSE WITH THE ECONOMIC ELITE, ALTHOUGH EFFECT OF SEVERAL GOC POLICIES ADOPTED FOR OTHER REASONS IS TO FAVOR THEM. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE NOTE PUBLIC STANCE OF SUCH NEO-FASCIST SPOKESMEN AS FORMER "PATRIA Y LIBERTAD" LEADER PABLO RODRIGUEZ, WHO HAS CONSISTENTLY ARGUED THAT GOC SHOULD ADOPT POPULIST ECONOMIC MEASURES IN ORDER TO RELIEVE PRESSURE ON GOC AND LET IT GET ON WITH TASK OF BUILDING A NEW "NATIONALIST" POLITICAL SYSTEM. IT IS WORTH REMEMBERING THAT MOST MILITARY OFFICERS (EXCEPT POSSIBLY FOR NAVY) THEMSELVES ARE FROM MIDDLE CLASS OR LOWER MIDDLE CLASS AND NOT FROM THE ELITE. GIVEN THEIR INTEREST IN ORDER, HIERARCHY, AND DISCIPLINE AND THEIR INHERENT DISTRUST OF THE ELITE, THE POSITION ARGUED BY RODRIGUEZ MAY WELL FIND AN ECHO IN MILITARY RANKS.

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